Approval of Maharashtra Water Supply and Sewerage Project

*327. SHRI VED PRAKASH P. GOYAL : Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) Whether it is a fact that Maharashtra Water Supply and Sewerage Project, Stage-II is awaiting the approval of Government;

(b) if so, the response of Government on the said project;

(c) by when the approval is expected; and

(d) the resons for delay ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA) : (a) and (b) The Government of Maharashtra had proposed the Maharashtra Water Supply and Sewerage Project, Stage-II for World Bank assistance. The scope, size and cost of the project was revised by the State Government from time to time. The Ministry of Urban Development had approved the project in principle at an estimated cost of Rs.863 crores and had recommended the same to the Department of Economic Affairs (DEA) on 29-11-1996 for World Bank assistance. The DEA also recommended the project proposal to the World Bank on 14-1-1997. Therefore, in so far as external assistance is concerned, the proposal was approved by the Government.

The Government of Maharasthra had subsequently reported that as desired by the World Bank, a modified Project Report based on 1997-98 prices costing Rs. 1389.59 crores had been submitted to the World Bank on 2-4-1998. However, the World Bank has not made any commitment so far to include this modified project in their lending programme. As far as Ministry of Urban Development is concerned, the modified Project Report has been cleared from technical angle by the Central Public Health & Environmental Engineering Organisation in this Ministry on 10-4-2000 after obtaining necessary clarifications from the Maharasthra Jeevan Pradhikaran. So far as clearances of other concerned Departments of the Union and State Governments are concerned, the Maharasthra Jeevan Pradhikaran has reported as under:—

† Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.

(i) Clearances of the Central Water Commission for the Hydrology Study Report (namely, water availability, flood study and simulation study) and Ministry of Rural Development for rural component of the project have been obtained on 12-10-97 and 14-1-98 respectively.

(ii) Ministry of Welfare had informed on 26-3-97 that there is no necessity of their clearance.

(iii) Environmental clearance from Ministry of Environment and Forests is under process for which meetings of the Expert Committee for River Valley and Hydro-electric Projects were held. The Committee has sought clarifications on rainfall-runoff characteristics and detailed survey report during and after rainy season with mitigation measures, which has been held up due to opposition by project affected persons. Flora and Fauna survey has been entrusted by the Government of Maharashtra to Forest Division, Alibag on 10-2-99, which is awaited.

(iv) Resettlement and Rehabilitation of Project Affected Persons Action Plan has been approved by the Water Supply and Sanitation Department, Government of Maharashtra on 20-6-98.

(v) Diversion of forest land is under process by the Revenue and Forest Department of Government of Maharashtra.

(vi) Administrative approval of the project has been sought from Government of Maharashtra on 30-3-98, which is awaited.

(vii) Acquisition of private land for the dam and submergence area has been submitted to the District Authorities, Raigad in June, 1999, which is held up due to opposition by project affected persons.

Besides the above clearances, the State Government has to indicate the availability of finances for obtaining clearance of the Planning Commission.

(c) In view of the position stated above, it is not possible to indicate by when approval by all the concerned authorities would be given.

(d) Considering the complex nature of the project and involvement of several departments of the State and Central Governments, reasons for delay cannot be assigned to any particular department. It is up to the Maharashtra Jeevan Pradhikaran and Government of Maharashtra to pursue the various clearances required for the project.